

POLICE COMMITTEE MINUTES

November 5, 1998

The Police Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on November 5, 1998 at 9:33 a.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Pat Pomeroy, Chairman
John Giles
Bill Jaffa

COMMITTEE ABSENT

None

COUNCIL PRESENT

Jim Davidson
Keno Hawker

STAFF PRESENT

C.K. Luster
Lin Adams
Steve Burg
Dennis Compton
Fred Conway
Linda Crocker
Sandra Driscoll
G.T. Fowler
Mike Hutchinson
Ellen Pence
Bryan Raines
Tom Remes
Dan Saban
Jan Strauss
Ursula Strephans
Others

OTHERS PRESENT

Robbie Sherwood
Others

1. Discuss and consider the disposal of weapons seized by the Police Department.

Police Chief Jan Strauss and Assistant Police Chief Fred Conway addressed the Committee relative to this agenda item. Chief Conway referred to a report distributed to the Committee and provided background information relative to this issue. Chief Conway discussed staff's recommendation that the current method of disposing of seized weapons to licensed firearms dealers through a closed bid system be continued.

Chief Conway informed the Committee that to the best of his knowledge none of the weapons that have been disposed of in accordance with the current policy were used to commit crimes and emphasized that a majority of the weapons come into the Police Department's possession as a result of forfeiture. Chief Conway commented that the monies generated as a result of the closed bid system are deposited into the General Fund account.

Committeemember Jaffa stated the opinion that the revenues generated as a result of this process should be utilized to fund gun awareness/educational programs within the City of Mesa. Committeemember Jaffa noted that the Police Departments in surrounding cities and towns destroy almost all of the seized weapons and stated that should the Council not support a recommendation to use the funds as a result of the bidding

process to implement an educational, gun-awareness program, Committeemember Jaffa will then support a motion to destroy the weapons rather than allow the generated revenues to be placed back in the General Fund account.

Committeemember Giles commended the members of the Committee who spoke in support of destroying the weapons rather than allowing them to go to bid but stated the opinion that the destruction of the weapons will not lessen the number of guns that are available on the streets. Committeemember Giles stated that he would prefer that the weapons continue to be disposed of in the current manner but added that the revenues that are generated as a result of this process should be used to fund a worthwhile program, such as assisting crime victims.

Chairman Pomeroy commented that the current policy provides that firearms valued at \$100 or less be destroyed and added that another alternative may be to increase that cut-off amount to \$200 or possibly even \$300.

Councilmember Hawker emphasized that citizens have the Constitutional right to protect themselves when faced with deadly force and expressed the opinion that the destruction of the weapons is inappropriate and should cease.

Councilmember Davidson stated the opinion that the weapons should not be sold back into the community. Councilmember Davidson added that he believes a sufficient number of reasonably priced firearms are currently available to ensure that citizens may purchase weapons should they choose to do so in accordance with their Constitutional rights. Councilmember Davidson expressed the opinion that the weapons should be destroyed.

Chairman Pomeroy concurred with Councilmember Davidson and spoke in support of destroying the firearms rather than allowing them to be sold to licensed firearm dealers.

Councilmember Jaffa stressed the importance of ensuring that revenues generated as a result of the sale of the weapons be used to fund educational programs related to gun use and safety. Councilmember Jaffa reiterated that should the Council not support a recommendation from the Committee to utilize the generated revenues to fund such a worthwhile program, he would then vote in support of destroying the weapons rather than continuing the present policy of allowing the monies to be placed back in the General Fund account.

Chief Strauss commented that staff would analyze available options and provide recommendations at a future meeting.

Councilmember Davidson expressed the opinion that the destruction of the firearms would generate the most significant impact and would gain the attention of the public.

Chairman Pomeroy concurred with Councilmember Davidson's remark.

It was moved by Committeemember Jaffa, seconded by Committeemember Giles, to recommend to the Council that the City's current method of disposing of weapons seized by the Police Department through a closed bid system be continued and that the Police Department prepare recommendations for consideration relative to utilizing the monies that are generated as a result of the bids to fund educational, victim assistance related, and/or other appropriate, worthwhile programs within the City of Mesa.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Giles-Jaffa
NAYS - Pomeroy

Chairman Pomeroy declared the motion carried by majority vote.

2. Adjournment.

It was moved by Committeemember Giles, seconded by Committeemember Jaffa, that the Police Committee meeting adjourn at 10:02 a.m.

Carried unanimously.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Police Committee meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 5th day of November, 1998. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this ____ day of _____ 1998

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK